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ABSTRACT

About 30 percent of American children are regularly involved as bullies, victims, or both. Despite this number, bullying behavior is rarely detected by teachers and is even less frequently taken seriously. The consequences of bullying are far reaching, from lower attendance and student achievement to increased incidence of violence and juvenile crime. The dynamics of bullying behavior need to be understood and taken seriously if schools are to be safe and effective. This booklet provides an overview of what is currently known about bullying behavior and successful efforts to address it. Topics discussed include research findings; schoolwide efforts undertaken to prevent bullying; what parents, teachers, and counselors can do to address bullying; what policymakers should consider; and potential pitfalls. The approaches taken by five schools (including one district and state organization) are described to illustrate the ways school staff members implemented and adapted a program for their students' needs. The booklet ends with a list of the programs mentioned along with contact information, a technical assistance resource, and reading resources. A list of questions and worksheet to aid in choosing a bullying prevention program are also provided. (Contains 27 references.) (RT)

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SCHOOLWIDE PREVENTION OF BULLYING

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SCHOOLWIDE PREVENTION OF BULLYING

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&
JENNIFER RAILSBACK

DECEMBER 2001

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Foreword

By Request is a quarterly booklet series produced by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. These reports briefly address current educational concerns and issues as indicated by requests for information that come to the Laboratory from the Northwest region and beyond. Each booklet in the series contains a discussion of research and literature pertinent to the issue, a sampling of how Northwest schools are addressing the issue, suggestions for adapting these ideas to schools, selected references, and contact information.

One objective of the series is to foster a sense of community and connection among educators. Another is to increase awareness of current education-related themes and concerns. Each booklet will give practitioners a glimpse of how fellow educators are addressing issues, overcoming obstacles, and attaining success in certain areas. The series goal is to give educators current, reliable, and useful information on topics that are important to them.

INTRODUCTION

I Hate My Life
By Sarah

I have always been bullied. I don't know why or anything but it's something I thought would go away but it didn't and I often think that I'm going to completely crack. I do have friends and they are the bestis friends that you could possibly ask for but it doesn't make you feel any better!

*I told the school cause it's really bad now but they haven't done anything about it and I now suffer from tension headaches because of it. I have exams this year and I don't want it to get in the way but it probably will and that really ***** me off!**

This story is just one of many cries for help posted on the www.bullying.org Web site, a forum for children and teenagers who have experienced bullying. Daily, students from around the world post stories, poems, plays, and songs that speak to their pain and frustration, as well as their sense that the adults in their lives are unwilling to help.

It is estimated that 30 percent of American children are regularly involved in bullying, either as bullies, victims, or both (National Resource Center for Safe Schools [NRCSS], 2001). Approximately 15 percent of students are "severely traumatized or distressed" by encounters with bullies, and 8 percent report being victimized at school at least once a week (Hoover & Oliver, 1996; Skiba & Fontanini, 2000).

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* Used with permission from www.bullying.org. "Where You Are Not Alone"

Despite these numbers, bullying behavior is rarely detected by teachers, and is even less frequently taken seriously (NRCSS, 1999). Overwhelmingly, the research reflects a significant gap between educators' perceptions and actual incidents of bullying at school. In one study, classroom teachers identified and intervened in only 4 percent of bullying incidents (Skiba & Fontanini, 2000). Part of the problem is that bullying is more likely to occur in places where adults are not. However, lack of understanding of the nature and severity of bullying behavior also contributes significantly to many adults' inability or unwillingness to get involved (U.S. Department of Education [USDOE], 1998).

The consequences of bullying are far reaching, ranging from lower attendance and student achievement to increased incidence of violence and juvenile crime. Children who bully are more likely to become violent adults, while victims of bullying often suffer from anxiety, low self-esteem, and depression well into adulthood (Banks, 2000; NRCSS, 1999). Even students who are not directly involved in bullying are affected: Children and teens who regularly witness bullying at school suffer from a less secure learning environment, the fear that the bully may target them next, and the knowledge that teachers and other adults are either unable or unwilling to control bullies' behavior (USDOE, 1998).

Clearly, understanding—and taking seriously—the dynamics of bullying behavior among school-aged children is essential if we are to succeed in building safe and effective schools (Banks, 2000). This booklet provides an overview of what is currently known about bullying behavior and

successful efforts to address it. The Northwest Sampler section at the end of the booklet profiles a number of anti-bullying programs and offers resources for further research and program development.

IN CONTEXT

Across the country, bullying is receiving increased attention in school board meetings, in the media, and in state legislatures. Between 1999 and 2001, at least eight states considered and/or adopted legislation directing schools to develop anti-bullying policies or programs (Zehr, 2001). In some states, statewide bullying programs are already in place, while in other states, such as Michigan, Colorado, and Oregon, schools are scrambling to build programs and comply with new laws.

To be sure, bullying is not a new phenomenon. What is new is the growing awareness that bullying has serious consequences for both students and schools. According to Banks (2000), bullying behavior contributes to lower attendance rates, lower student achievement, low self-esteem, and depression, as well as higher rates of both juvenile and adult crime. Consider the following statistics:

- 160,000 students miss school every day due to fear of attack or intimidation by a bully (Fried & Fried, 1996); 7 percent of eighth-graders stay home at least once a month because of bullies (Banks, 2000)

- Approximately 20 percent of students are scared throughout much of the school day (Garrity, et al., 1997)

- 14 percent of eighth- through 12th-graders and 22 percent of fourth- through eighth-graders surveyed reported that "bullying diminished their ability to learn in school" (Hoover & Oliver, 1996, p. 10)

- 10 percent of students who drop out of school do so because of repeated bullying (Weinhold & Weinhold, 1998)

- "Bullies identified by age eight are six times more likely to be convicted of a crime by age 24 and five times more likely than non-bullies to end up with serious criminal records by the age of 30" (Maine Project Against Bullying, 2000); 60 percent of students characterized as bullies in grades 6-9 had at least one criminal conviction by age 24 (Banks, 2000)

- Roughly two-thirds of school shooters had "felt persecuted, bullied, threatened, attacked, or injured by others. ...a number of the teenagers had suffered sustained, severe bullying and harassment" (Bowman, 2001)

While school shootings and violent retaliations to bullying remain rare, these incidents have forced educators, parents, and legislators to take a more serious look at bullying behavior and the impact it has on both students and the school environment. The following sections look more closely at bullying and at what we can do to limit the level of harassment, intimidation, and aggression that students routinely witness and experience at school.

UNTANGLING THE MYTHS: WHAT THE RESEARCH TELLS US

Myths about bullying behavior abound. It is not uncommon to hear that bullying is just a "normal" part of childhood, that children who bully simply suffer from low self-esteem, that victims really ought to figure out how to stand up for themselves. Children and adults both frequently accuse victims of bringing the bullying on themselves—either by provoking the bullies or by making themselves look weak and defenseless (Banks, 2000).

The first step in untangling these myths is to define exactly what bullying is and how it differs from "normal" childhood conflicts. Perhaps the most important distinctions have to do with duration, power, and intent to harm (Greene, 2001). *Bullying, unlike isolated conflicts between individuals, occurs when a student or group of students targets an individual repeatedly over time, using physical or psychological aggression to dominate the victim* (Hoover & Oliver, 1996; Rigby, 1995; USDOE, 1998). The repeated incidents function to create and enforce an imbalance of power between bully and victim.

Among middle and high school students, bullying behavior most frequently involves teasing and social exclusion, but may also include physical violence, threats, theft, sexual and racial harassment, public humiliation, and destruction of the targeted student's property. Bullying behavior in elementary grades is more likely than in older grades to involve physical aggression, but is characterized by teasing, intimidation, and social exclusion as well (Banks, 2000).

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Additional facts about bullying:

- Both boys and girls bully; some research indicates that boys bully more than girls do, but this may have to do with how bullying is defined and/or identified.

- Bullying by girls is often more subtle and harder to detect than bullying by boys (NRCSS, 1999). Boys tend to use more physical aggression than girls do. Bullying by girls more often takes the form of teasing and social exclusion (Hoover & Oliver, 1996).

- Boys tend to bully both boys and girls, while girls are more likely to victimize other girls (Hoover & Oliver, 1996).

- Girls are more likely to bully in a group (Kreidler, 1996).

- Bullying in school tends to increase through elementary grades, peak in middle school, and drop off by the 11th and 12th grades (Banks, 2000; NRCSS, 1999).

Identifying students who bully others

When working to determine if one student is bullying another, it is important to remember that a key element of bullying behavior is an imbalance or abuse of power. Conflicts between students of roughly the same social status or who are equally capable of defending themselves are not typically bullying situations. Signs that may be helpful in identifying a student who bullies others include:

- The student regularly engages in hurtful teasing, name calling, or intimidation of others, particularly those who

are smaller or less able to defend themselves. The taunting and harassment is not two-way, and appears to reinforce an imbalance of status or power (Olweus, 1993).

- The student may believe that he or she is superior to other students, or blame others for being smaller, physically weaker, or different; students who bully "may brag about their actual or imagined superiority over other students" (Olweus, 1993, p. 59).

- The student frequently fights with others as a way to assert dominance; students who bully often pick fights with students they believe to be weaker, and who do not want to be involved in the conflict (Olweus, 1993). Students who bully may also "induce some of their followers to do the 'dirty work' while they themselves keep in the background" (Olweus, 1993, p. 58).

- Students who bully tend to have little empathy, "derive satisfaction from inflicting injury and suffering," and "seem to desire power and control" (NRCSS, 1999).

Despite popular perceptions of bullies, students who bully generally have average to high self-esteem, may be popular with both teachers and classmates, and may also do well in school (Olweus, 1993; NRCSS, 1999).

Identifying children who are being bullied

Again, it's important to note that primary indicators of bullying behavior include duration, power, and intent to harm—there is a difference between children who are occasionally teased by friends and those who are being harassed

and intimidated. Depending on the situation, some or all of the following signs may help identify a student who is being bullied.

- Students who are bullied are frequently "teased in a nasty way, called names (may also have a derogatory nickname), taunted, belittled, ridiculed, intimidated, degraded, threatened, given orders, dominated, [or] subdued" (Olweus, 1993, p. 54).

- A student who regularly has bruises, torn clothing, or injuries that can't be easily explained, or who often has his or her belongings taken or damaged, may be being bullied (Olweus, 1993).

- Students who are bullied often have few or no close friends at school (NRCSS, 1999), and are frequently socially isolated (Banks, 2000). Further, they may frquently be chosen last for teams or other group activities (Olweus, 1993).

- A student who is being bullied is often less assertive, or lacks the skills necessary to respond to other students' teasing and harassment (NRCSS, 1999); he or she may also appear weak or easily dominated (Banks, 2000; Kreidler, 1996; NRCSS, 1999).

- Students who are bullied repeatedly may also "try to stay close to the teacher or other adults during breaks," avoid restrooms and other isolated areas, and/or make excuses to stay home from school as much as possible (Olweus, 1993, p. 55).

In general, children who are bullied tend to have lower self-esteem and self-confidence (Kriedler, 1996). They may perceive themselves negatively (particularly after repeated harassment and victimization), and shy away from confrontation and conflict—traits that other students may pick up on (Kreidler, 1996; Olweus, 1993). As a result of the bullying, they may often "appear distressed, unhappy, depressed, [and] tearful," and their performance and interest in school may begin to deteriorate, as well (Olweus, 1993, p. 55).

That said, there is no hard evidence to show that children who are targeted by bullies share certain physical characteristics, such as wearing glasses or being overweight (NRCSS, 1999). Although students themselves often identify specific physical and social factors as contributing to victimization, the research does not appear to support this. According to Hoover and Oliver (1996), "It is not clear ... that chronic scapegoats are objectively different from students not victimized" (p. 17).

SCHOOLWIDE EFFORTS TO PREVENT BULLYING

Without question, the most effective means of addressing bullying is through comprehensive, schoolwide programs (Atlas & Pepler, 1998; Garrity et al., 1997; Skiba & Fontanini, 2000). Although teachers, counselors, and parents may be able to deal with individual cases of bullying as they come up, it is unlikely to have a significant impact on the incidence of bullying in the school (Banks, 2000).

For one thing, bullying often goes undetected by both teachers and parents (Skiba & Fontanini, 2000). As noted earlier, adults typically identify less than 10 percent of bullying incidents. In addition, many teachers and administrators fail to understand the dynamics of bullying. Without adequate training, some educators may actually endorse bullying behavior, either by sending students the message that bullying is "part of growing up," or by simply ignoring the behavior (USDOE, 1998).

Perhaps the most important reason for developing a schoolwide anti-bullying program, however, is to engage and empower "the silent majority": the large percentage of students who regularly witness bullying at school but don't know what they can do to help (Atlas & Pepler, 1998). Programs that teach students to recognize and intervene in bullying have been found to have the greatest impact on curbing incidents of bullying and harassment at school (Rigby, 1995).

Schoolwide anti-bullying programs can take many shapes, as the programs profiled in the Northwest Sampler section of

this booklet indicate. Whether your school plans to implement a bullying prevention curriculum, develop an anti-bullying task force, or integrate anti-bullying efforts into established violence prevention programs, there are seven important steps to take:

1. Assess your school's needs and goals.
During the initial phases of program development, survey students, teachers, and parents about the occurrence of bullying in the school (USDOE, 1998). This will not only provide information about where, when, and between whom bullying occurs at your school, but will also allow you to examine any disparities between student, teacher, and parent perceptions (Saufler, n.d.). You will then need to spend time discussing which of the issues identified in the survey are most urgent and how best to address them, given available staff, funding, resources, and time (American Federation of Teachers, 2000).

2. Develop an anti-bullying policy.
Using the findings of the needs assessment to guide discussion, work with parents, students, administrators, teachers, and other school staff to develop a comprehensive, schoolwide policy on bullying (Hoover & Oliver, 1996). The policy should include a clear definition of bullying and a description of how the school will respond to bullying incidents (Rigby, 1995), as well as a discussion of program philosophy and goals.

3. Provide training for teachers, administrators, and other school staff.
Set aside time during the school year to share and discuss information about bullying with all school employees

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(USDOE, 1998). If possible, make an effort to include staff members who are likely to be present in places bullying tends to occur: playground monitors, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, custodial staff, and so forth. Training should include definitions of bullying, indicators of bullying behavior, characteristics of bullies and victims, ways to integrate anti-bullying material into curriculum, and strategies for addressing bullying behavior. Quality training and opportunities for discussion are essential if all staff are to buy in to anti-bullying policies and programs.

4. Involve parents.
If possible, get parents involved in both program planning and implementation (USDOE, 1998). Invite them to provide information for program assessments, share survey results with them, offer them training and information, and keep them abreast of program developments. Encourage parents to contact teachers or administrators if they suspect that a child is bullying or being bullied (Fried & Fried, 1996).

5. Identify resources for bullies, victims, and families.
Efforts to address bullying behavior are not over when the bully is caught and disciplined. Students who bully repeatedly may benefit from anger management classes or individual counseling, while students who have been victimized may require support in dealing with anxiety and depression (Fried & Fried, 1996). Because many children who bully or are victimized experience bullying at home, it may be necessary to develop intervention strategies involving the whole family (Fried & Fried, 1996; Hoover & Oliver, 1996). Anti-bullying programs should clearly identify resources for students and families that are available both at school and in the community.

6. Provide increased supervision in areas where bullying tends to occur.
Identify places on school grounds where bullying is more likely to occur, and work with the school staff to ensure there is adequate adult supervision in those areas. Playgrounds, bus stops, hallways, and school bathrooms often provide easy opportunities for bullies to isolate and intimidate their victims (NRCSS, 1999; USDOE, 1998).

7. Integrate anti-bullying themes and activities into curriculum.
Classroom teachers play a central role in the way that bullying policies and programs are presented and delivered to students. Curricula should include definitions of bullying, discussions of how bullying affects everyone, ways students can help others, and assertiveness training (Fried & Fried, 1996; Kreidler, 1996). Depending on the age of the students, you may want provide students opportunities to role-play, and/or involve students in strategizing specific ways bullying can be addressed in their school (Pirozzi, 2001). Most important, though, bullying curriculum should emphasize to students the difference between tattling and telling on someone, and encourage them to report to adults any situation in which a peer is being bullied or abused.

Two good resources for developing anti-bullying curriculum are Nan Stein and Lisa Sjostrom's (1996) *Bullyproof: A Teacher's Guide on Teasing and Bullying for Use with Fourth- and Fifth- Grade Students* and Allan L. Beane's (1999) *Bully Free Classroom: Over 100 Tips and Strategies for Teachers K-8*. Both texts provide specific, detailed descriptions of activities and assignments dealing with bully-

ing that can be copied directly from the text or modified for different age groups.

For descriptions of anti-bullying programs that have been implemented by individual schools and districts, see the Northwest Sampler section at the end of this booklet.

ADDRESSING BULLYING ONE-ON-ONE: WHAT PARENTS, TEACHERS, AND COUNSELORS CAN DO

Keeping in mind that most incidents of bullying go unnoticed by adults, parents and educators may need to take an active role in identifying bullying behavior and working with students to address it. Although there is no substitute for a schoolwide program, there are some specific things that parents and educators can do to help students one-on-one as problems with bullying arise.

Probably the most important thing adults can do is to listen (NRCSS, 1999). Too often, children and young adults are told to "toughen up" or "ignore it" when they attempt to talk about bullying encounters at school. This kind of response makes students who are already socially isolated feel even more alone and helpless to prevent the harassment. It also sends the message that bullying is not taken seriously, and may even be their fault (USDOE, 1998).

Described below are a number of strategies available to adults concerned about bullying behavior. Some tips are more appropriate to classroom teachers, while some may be more applicable to parents, counselors, or other school staff.

- **Initiate conversations with students about bullying.** Don't wait for them to bring it up, or assume that because you haven't heard about it, that it's not happening. The vast majority of bullying behavior is never detected by adults, and many students are either too embarrassed or scared to talk about it. Conversations about specific bullying incidents may be held with individual students in

private, or the subject can be dealt with more generally in whole-class discussions (Fried & Fried, 1996).

- **Be prepared to intervene.**
  If you observe that a student is being bullied, step in immediately (USDOE, 1998). In situations in which bullying incidents are reported to you, you may want to work with the victim first to determine the best way to get involved.

- **Don't expect students to solve things themselves.**
  Peer mediation does not work in bullying situations and should be avoided. According to the U.S. Department of Education, the "difference in power between bullies and victims may cause victims to feel further victimized by the process or believe that they are somehow at fault" (USDOE, 1998, p. 7).

- **Encourage students to report incidents of bullying.**
  Especially with younger students, discuss the difference between simply telling on someone and stepping in to help another person (Fried & Fried, 1996; Kreidler, 1996).

- **Express strong disapproval of bullying when it occurs or comes up in conversation.**
  Be sure students know that you don't condone any kind of harassment or mistreatment of others, whether it be teasing, social exclusion, or physical violence (Kreidler, 1996). As much as possible, reassure students that your classroom is a safe and supportive place (USDOE, 1998)

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- **Work with students on developing assertiveness and conflict resolution skills.**
  This is an important step in helping both students who are victimized and students who witness bullying learn ways to diffuse the situation. Adults should avoid teaching children to fight back, however, or to respond to violence in kind (USDOE, 1998). Fighting back only escalates the problem and reinforces the belief that weaker and noncombative students somehow deserve to be bullied.

- **Focus on developing empathy and respect for others.**
  Create opportunities for students to learn to work together, such as assignments that require sharing and collaboration (Hoover & Oliver, 1996; Rigby, 1995). Praise students, especially those who tend to bully others, for acts of kindness and respect (Kreidler, 1996; USDOE, 1998). Although focusing on empathy alone is unlikely to lead to significant change, it demonstrates to students that everyone is valued and respected in your classroom.

- **Avoid physical forms of discipline, such as spanking.**
  Hitting children when they misbehave simply reinforces the belief that "might makes right" and that violence and intimidation are appropriate ways to get what you want (Fried & Fried, 1996). Whenever possible, model nonviolent means of resolving conflicts.

- **Keep a log of bullying incidents.**
  Record all incidents of bullying, including who was involved, where it occurred, how often, and what strategies you used to address it (Kreidler, 1996). Over time, the log will allow you to identify any patterns in bullying behavior, as well as what kinds of interventions worked best to stop it.

- **Deal with bullying incidents consistently, in a manner appropriate to the situation.**
  If your school does not already have a policy in place for dealing with bullying, write a policy specific to your classroom (Hoover & Oliver, 1996; Kreidler, 1996). In general, discipline policies concerning bullying should include an immediate response to the behavior, follow-up, and feedback (USDOE, 1998). Depending on the severity of the bullying, sanctions such as suspension may be appropriate (Rigby, 1995). Remember that you may not be able to monitor students' progress very easily, as most bullying occurs outside the view of teachers, parents, and other adults.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR POLICYMAKERS

As states such as New Hampshire, West Virginia, and Oregon have demonstrated, there is much that can be done about school bullying at the policy level. Legislators can earmark funds for bullying prevention, encourage school leaders to provide training for students and staff, and highlight the importance of including anti-bullying policies in efforts to create safer schools.

During the 2000-2001 legislative sessions, for example, several states either debated or adopted legislation requiring school districts to develop anti-bullying policies (Zehr, 2001). Although provisions vary from state to state, most of the legislation:

- Acknowledges that if students are to learn and achieve to high standards, they must feel safe and secure at school
- Advises state departments of education to develop model anti-bullying policies and prevention programs to share with school districts
- Mandates individual school districts to develop and implement anti-bullying policies and/or programs, and to report those policies and programs to the state education department
- Recommends that school employees receive training on addressing bullying behavior in the classroom and on school grounds

- Encourages school districts to form an anti-bullying task force, which would include parents, students, counselors, and law enforcement in addition to school staff

Although most state legislation proposes a number of criteria for school districts to follow when developing anti-bullying programs and policies, it also strongly recommends that the local policies be developed in collaboration with parents, teachers, school staff, volunteers, students, administrators, and community members. *(See, for example, Oregon and Michigan anti-bullying legislation.)* As with any legislation directed toward schools, providing opportunities for local input and involvement is likely to create greater buy-in for a program than mandating a strict course of action.

Policymakers are also advised to think carefully about any additional demands new initiatives will place on educators' resources and time. What is the minimum amount of paperwork and documentation necessary for the policy to be implemented effectively? Will the program require a part- or full-time coordinator, and if so, where will the money come from to support this position? What incentives can be provided for schools and teachers not just to comply with the legislation, but to build strong and innovative programs? Again, involving educators in developing the legislation is likely to generate greater support and avoid potential obstacles to program implementation.

POTENTIAL PITFALLS

Schools that have struggled to implement anti-bullying programs frequently cite time, lack of support, and inadequate training as the main obstacles to building an effective program. To increase your chances of success, consider the following suggestions from researchers and seasoned program staff:

1. As with any new program, avoid creating a great deal of extra paperwork for teachers or other school staff. Anti-bullying programs are more likely to succeed if they are not seen as a burden, or as just another set of hoops that teachers and students must jump through.

2. Before moving forward with an anti-bullying program, secure administrative support at both the school and ditrict levels. Depending on the scope of the program, this may mean soliciting funding, release time, and/or support for new policies and curriculum.

3. Be careful that the bullying program does not result in students being stigmatized—either as bullies or as victims. Placing a label on a student may ensure that he or she gets help, but it may also work to reinforce the bullying dynamic and make it more difficult for students to escape those roles.

4. Remember that the most effective anti-bullying programs are ongoing throughout the school year, and are integrated with the curriculum, the school's discipline policies, and other violence prevention efforts at school. A handful of isolated lessons is unlikely to produce significant change (Pirozzi, 2001).

5. And finally, don't expect change overnight. Effectively addressing bullying behavior takes time, and will require a sustained and conscious effort to change the overall culture of the school. In order to accomplish this, the entire school community must be engaged, committed, and involved.

CONCLUSION

Given the serious effects bullying behavior has on both students and schools, we can't afford to simply dismiss it as a "normal" or inevitable part of childhood. There is nothing "normal" about ongoing incidents of harassment, violence, and intimidation. Bullying not only leads to depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem in students who are targeted, but also causes other students to feel unsafe at school and significantly interferes with learning. Long-term effects of bullying on students who bully, such as aggressive behavior continuing into adulthood, cannot be ignored either (Schwarzbeck, 1998). Students of all ages deserve to feel safe and supported at school (USDOE, 1998).

Taking bullying behavior seriously is an important step in working toward safe and effective schools. Through training, collaboration, and carefully designed programs, educators, policymakers, parents, and students can work together to ensure that schools are a place where students feel welcome, included, and ready to learn.

SCHOOL SAMPLER

On the following pages is a sampling of how schools (including one district and one state organization) are responding to the problem of bullying. All have taken a schoolwide approach to bullying, using research-based programs and curricula. Although some schools have been implementing bullying strategies for several years, many have just started. Many schools do not yet have data from formal evaluations, however, staff and administrators have offered their own observations as to the outcomes of their efforts.

The goal in describing the schools' efforts is not to focus on the merits of a specific program, although certainly the program chosen is important. Rather we want to describe the ways school staff members have implemented and adapted a program for their students' needs. Schools starting to consider how they might implement bullying prevention strategies can find examples in these pages. Contact information is listed for each school.

Location

Assumption St. Bridget School (Grades K–8)
6220 32nd Avenue NE
Seattle, WA 98115

Contact

Michael Foy, Principal
Phone: (206) 524-7452
E-mail: mfoy@asbschool.org

Description

A private K–8 school serving 540 students in Seattle, Assumption St. Bridget had been using the Committee for Children's award-winning conflict resolution program, Second Step, for a number of years. While Second Step has been very effective, especially with the younger children who are learning the skills of impulse control, empathy, and solving problems with peers, exclusionary behavior among the older children was not being addressed. When the school was asked to pilot Committee for Children's new research-based bullying prevention program, Steps to Respect, Principal Michael Foy was delighted to agree. Says Foy, "Steps to Respect builds on what the children have already learned with Second Step, and further helps children identify healthy relationships."

Consistent with the research that demonstrates the effectiveness of a whole-school approach to bullying, Steps to Respect provides strategies to decrease bullying at the individual child, peer group, and schoolwide levels.

The student curriculum part of the program focuses on three main components: friendship skills; the "three R's" of bullying (Recognizing, Refusing, and Reporting); and the role of bystanders. Lessons build on each other as students learn concrete skills for making friends, conversational skills, managing conflicts between friends, and role-playing the techniques.

The skill lessons relating to the role of bystanders are key to the curriculum. Students are given the skills to make it easier for them to intervene when they see bullying behavior.

Improving the effectiveness of adults' response to bullying is a major goal. The importance of adult training is crucial to the success of the program, especially to rally the entire staff around the importance of the issue. For the program to work, report the developers, you must have a consistent approach for all staff to use when dealing with problems. "The lessons teach all children to report bullying," says Karen Summers, a trainer and implementation specialist for Steps to Respect, "and adults need to learn to listen and coach them on how to deal with it. Children know their problems will be taken seriously when teachers take action."

The program recommends that the following steps be taken before the lessons are taught to the children so that an environment is created that is less conducive to bullying:

- Establish an anti-bullying policy
- Train the entire staff in the harmful effects of bullying and the need to consistently respond to children's reports (include all staff members, from playground monitors to teachers to bus drivers)

- Communicate with parents regarding curriculum and policy

The most crucial parts of the program as seen by Foy over the years, have been:

1. Using a survey to understand and assess student and teacher perceptions about bullying. This is a powerful tool to show parents and teachers the extent of the problem. When Assumption St. Bridget first surveyed students and teachers, the students reported a much higher incidence of bullying than their teachers. This came as quite a wake-up call to parents.

2. Providing extensive teacher and staff training so that everyone understands how to help.

3. Empowering both kids who are targeted by bullies and those who are bystanders. The foundation of Steps to Respect is in giving children the skills to resolve the problem themselves if possible.

4. Helping all have a common language for identifying healthy relationships.

When asked why a whole-school approach has worked for the school, Foy said, "This program is well integrated into the curriculum and is not just an add-on." For example, the literature component of the program reinforces the concepts introduced in the other lessons. Teachers can choose from a selection of novels at each grade level. Different types of bullying occur in each novel.

Another plus about this program has been the different curricula for different age groups. "One-shot programs don't work for middle school students to really see the continuum of behavior. An ongoing curriculum for each grade enables children to recognize patterns as they mature."

Although the school is just now tabulating data based on a recent survey, staff members have made many observations since the program was implemented, including:

1. Kids are reporting incidents of bullying or asking for assistance in dealing with bullying much more often than before. Rather than seeing this as a sign that bullying has increased, staff see that the program has been successful in empowering students to take action against bullying, and also in creating a climate where students feel safe in approaching an adult and knowing that an adult will help them.

2. Children understand how being a bystander affects bullying behavior. Many kids who have observed bullying behavior are reporting these incidents to adults. "This is what we want to see happening in our school," says Foy.

3. The program has given the school a forum to talk to parents about what is valued at the school. The parent education component shows parents that even incidents outside school affect learning inside school.

4. As a result of the parent education program, more parents are calling the school staff asking for assistance in dealing with children who are bullied and also asking what to do about children who exhibit bullying behavior.

5. Parents are also calling other parents and resolving problems without conflict, where "no one has to be the bad guy."

Location

Liberty Middle School (Grades 6–8)
13496 Liberty School Road
Ashland, VA 23005

Contact

Marilyn Towsey
Bullying Prevention Committee Member
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Description

Liberty Middle School is a rural school located near Richmond, Virginia. It serves 1,200 students in grades 6–8. The school has become more ethnically diverse in recent years, drawing students from the nearby town as well as rural families who have been in the community for generations. The school is now about 20 percent African American, and has a small but growing population of students who speak English as a second language.

For the past 12 years, the school has had a violence prevention team working to keep the school a safe place for learning. The prevention strategies focus on fostering respect, building social skills, and working together. Students have been very willing to come together and work on peer mediation. The topic of bullying was a sensitive issue, however—many students were unwilling to talk about this subject. This was a sign for the school staff that more attention needed to be paid to discussing and preventing bullying.

The school discovered the well-respected work of Dan Olweus who developed the research-based Bullying

Prevention Program in Norway in 1983. The staff applied for a grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and became one of five schools in the United States to pilot the program. Although the program was new to this country, it has proven results in decreasing the frequency of bullying incidents by 50 percent after two years of implementation in Norway schools. The program is the only bullying prevention program at this time to have been identified by OJJDP and the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado at Boulder as an exemplary, proven, replicable program meeting strict standards of effectiveness.

The Bullying Prevention Program is designed to reduce bullying by providing a comprehensive, schoolwide framework for intervention at the school, classroom, and individual levels. The goal in using interventions at all three levels is to ensure that students are given a consistent, coordinated, and strong message by everyone in the school that bullying will not be tolerated. An important part of the program is making sure that adults respond quickly to student concerns and that the responsibility for stopping the problem is on adults rather than on the children themselves. Another important aspect to the program is teaching children that bystanders have a responsibility to prevent bullying, either by refusing to support bullying behavior or to alert an adult to a problem.

Liberty was visited several times by the U.S. program coordinator Susan Limber of Clemson University and a representative from Boulder, Colorado to determine if the environment was conducive to implementing the schoolwide program effectively. For example, the program requires that a coordi-

nating team be established at either the district or school that includes a school administrator, a teacher from each grade, a guidance counselor, a school-based mental health/social services professional, and parent and student representatives. Because the school already had a violence prevention team in place represented by various staff and students, it was easier to start the process. Bullying prevention builds on what staff members have already been doing in terms of violence prevention. Marilyn Towsey, former prevention coordinator and currently a member of the bullying program committee, said that it is important to show the staff that a new program will build on what they already do, rather than being just another "add-on" requiring more work.

It was important that time be available for weekly student and faculty meetings. Liberty already had time built into the schedule for these meetings, so that the whole schedule didn't need to be reconfigured. Groups of 10–12 children and one adult now meet every week for 40 minutes to discuss the week's events and issues, and share concerns regarding bullying. The groups also have planned lessons on bullying.

Before implementation, the school administered the "Olweus Bully/Victim Questionnaire" to students to assess and focus the attention of adults on the problem. The questionnaire assesses the severity and frequency of bullying by age and gender, focuses adults on the need to address the problem, and identifies areas in the school where bullying occurs most often. Results showed that 29 percent of the students said they had been bullied in the preceding month, which is similar to the percentage found in other schools, according to recent national surveys.

The results of the survey also showed that education was needed about what bullying really is. Says Towsey: "About halfway through the survey, students said that they had begun to realize that bullying was more than pushing and hitting, that it was other kinds of behavior as well. Now children could put a label on behavior that they had assumed they just needed to put up with." Children were also able to see that they weren't alone in having a problem.

Liberty has a three-step process for dealing with bullying infractions which emphasizes education rather than punishment. The first offense is noted in a student's file with a warning that adults will be watching closely for further incidents. After a second offense, the child must sign a behavioral contract not to bully others and teachers contact the student's parent. The third offense requires parental notification and "re-education" counseling.

Both teacher and student education are important at Liberty. At the beginning of the year, teachers attend a half-day seminar with the coordinator. Teachers from each grade form a task force to develop bullying prevention curricula. Although the six lesson plans were designed by the program developer, teachers meet in teams to tailor the lesson plans to their own class. The lesson plans are adapted each year to keep the material fresh for teachers and students. Seventh-grade students are invited to the sixth-grade planning meetings to give advice based on their previous experience with the curriculum.

Bullying prevention has also become a community focus. A group of students has formed the STOP SQUAD, which has written and performs a skit called "Sticks and Stones" to

illustrate the different types of bullying. One segment of the skit portrays a popular student who abuses the power of being popular to bully others. The skits also show how it is sometimes difficult to bring up the problem at home, how hard it can be for children to talk about it with their families. "The skits have a tremendous effect on adults," says Towsey. "We show the skit to other schools and community groups to help develop a great awareness of the problem."

Funding is an issue. The largest source of funding has been a three-year grant from the Governor's Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities program. Towsey has been full-time coordinator of the program for the past two years. With funding cutbacks, this year there is a part-time coordinator, but the bullying committee in still firmly in place. Although the implementation of the program was originally funded by a grant, funding is now coming from the school and grants from the community services board. It was important to involve the entire community in the bullying issue, such as having the STOP SQUAD perform to community groups, so that the community will support the program. In fact, the community services board will help the school look for additional funding.

Although the data are not in yet from the first schoolwide post-survey taken last spring, a random sampling of students (60) who were asked questions regarding bullying is quite encouraging. The sampling indicated an increase in awareness of the problem—which is an important first step, since you can't solve a problem if people don't recognize there is one. More students, especially bystanders, are speaking up about bullying. Students are more willing to file reports of bullying, and are also speaking up more about adult bullying.

Last year only 83 bullying incidents were reported (out of 1,200 students). Of those 83, only one student had more than two reports of bullying. All others had one or two bullying reports. Says Towsey, "In 90 percent of the cases, the first offense [a reprimand of a note going in the student's file and a warning that teachers will be watching closely for repeated offenses] was all it took."

Location

Rocky Mountain Middle School (Grades 6–8)
3443 N. Ammon Road
Idaho Falls, ID 83401

Contact

Lori Wickham or Jim Veazey, Bullying Prevention Coordinators
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Description

Rocky Mountain Middle School counselor Lori Wickham at first did not refer to the school's anti-bullying strategies as a "program." As she discussed the strategies in an interview, however, it became evident that the school's methods were very much part of a whole-school, comprehensive effort where everyone is involved in creating a physically and emotionally safe place for children to learn.

To initiate discussion and create awareness of what everyone can do about bullying, all students and staff together in individual classes watch the video, "Set Straight on Bullies" (produced by the National School Safety Center in collaboration with the National Education Service). The 18-minute video, shown over two class sessions, explores all sides of the bullying problem--bullying behavior, what can victims do, what parents can do, and how the school and community can work to prevent the problem. A facilitator's guide is designed for up to four hours of staff development time that lays the groundwork for an anti-bullying action plan. Says Wickham, "it is very important to get across to all staff and students that bullying is not acceptable at our school, that

reports will always be followed up on, and that everyone knows what the consequences are."

Bullying prevention strategies do not end with the video and discussion. Many other strategies are in place. "Hassle logs" in which children log incidents of bullying have been effective for determining where a problem is and how much of a problem it is. If the logs indicate certain areas of the school where bullying often takes place, teacher observation is beefed up in those areas.

One effective strategy has been the formation of PALS, a program in which children are taught how to be aware of what is going on with their peers, including bullying. PALS emphasizes how bystanders can prevent bullying behavior, teaches children the skills to recognize bullying, and encourages children to report any signs of it.

The most effective strategy has been forming separate groups for children who have been targets of bullying and for children who bully others. These groups allow the children to communicate with each other in a safe setting. About one-third of all staff members in the school have been trained in facilitating these groups by a program called Student Assistant Training from the Chemical Awareness Training Institute. [For more information, call CATI at: (602) 867-7851]. The group provided training for one-third of the school staff, including non-teachers, to facilitate these groups. All the facilitators train together in Phoenix for three days. The facilitators are also given manuals to guide them in facilitating their bullying groups. This strategy has been in place for the last three years.

The groups have been effective for middle school students, who have the communication and social skills to be able to verbalize issues in the safe group climate. Wickham, who had been a counselor in an elementary school as well as at the middle level, said that in working with younger children on the issues of bullying, social and communication skills are emphasized more, as these children are still learning the art of getting along. Role-playing and empathy training are key. Role playing and empathy training are also necessary with middle school children, adds Wickham, but because older students have the verbal skills to articulate the problem, group sessions have developed an interpersonal connection for students that is crucial to creating that safe climate.

In a climate where teachers, administrators, and students all feel the push of high academic standards, it might be more of struggle to have staff invested in issues such as bullying. However, there has been little problem with buy-in at Rocky Mountain. Most staff members realize that anything that creates an unsafe climate will affect student learning. As staff are trained in the bullying prevention strategies and group facilitation, the message is spread to others in the school. "The training is crucial," says Wickham. "You can see the difference [in the understanding of the problem] between teachers who have been trained and [those] who haven't been." Because so many staff members are given the same training, the students know they will get the same message and assistance from many staff at their school, says Wickham.

To evaluate how the various strategies are working, the children are surveyed before they see the video and are again at the end of the school year. Children have reported feeling safer in school. There also has been a lower level of absen-

teeism in the last two years. Children are reporting fewer overt incidences of bullying.

When Wickham was asked, "What do you say to people who doubt the usefulness of a bullying prevention program, or even doubt that there is a problem?" she replied:

"Anything that is making kids not want to be at school is too much. We want kids to be here. We want it to be a safe and pleasant place to learn."

Location

Lebanon School District
485 S. Fifth Street
Lebanon, OR 97355

Contact

Kerry Luber, Director of Student Services
Phone: (541) 451-8511, ext. 241

Description

If there is any doubt that Oregon schools are taking the bullying issue seriously, one need only read the results of a survey of Oregon school principals conducted in spring 2000 (Sprague, 2001). Of the 432 surveys returned, the top-rated risk factor shown to increase school violence and discipline problems was bullying.

Certainly, student shootings such as the one at Thurston High School in Springfield, Oregon, have given schools a wake up call to the seriousness of violence, bullying, and other less-serious problem behaviors. Lebanon School District responded to the seriousness of the issue by conducting its own survey of teachers and students last year; bullying and harassment were among the top three concerns.

Lebanon has taken a whole-school approach to addressing problems of antisocial behavior, of which bullying is one step in a long continuum. Lebanon is using a research-based model, Effective Behavioral Support (EBS), developed at the University of Oregon. The model takes a three-tiered approach to prevention (Walker et al., 1996):

1. Primary or Universal Prevention for All Students
- Creating schoolwide discipline plans
- Providing instruction in conflict resolution/anger management strategies
- Providing effective teaching and schooling procedures

2. Secondary Prevention (One-on-One, Individual Interventions) for Students At-Risk for Anti-Social Behavior
- Identifying at-risk clusters of students
- Providing direct instruction in moral reasoning
- Lessons in anger management and self-control
- Providing school-based mentoring
- Encouraging family support and parent management training
- Providing consultant-based one-to-one interventions

3. Tertiary Prevention (Comprehensive) for High-Risk Students
- Connecting students to community-based social service agencies
- Developing individually tailored, wraparound services
- Providing alternative education strategies

The objective is to "inoculate" students against developing antisocial behavior by teaching prosocial behaviors. You can't just be reactive to a situation; you must be develop a social environment in which children will be less likely to be affected by antisocial behavior. Of course, there are students for whom the universal approach is not enough, and further strategies as outlined above are needed.

Lebanon started implementing universal interventions five years ago. Kerry Luber, director of student services, emphasizes that a three-to-five year commitment to this process is necessary, and that one-day inservice training sessions are not enough. "Workshops are helpful if people know how to apply what they have learned to their own situation."

Lebanon is making sure information is synthesized and applied. First, five to eight inservice training sessions are held in each school. District consultants work with teams in each school to apply what was learned in the inservice sessions to individual school situations. Each school team looks at its data to make decisions as to what changes should be made.

Evaluations of the strategies are ongoing. External consultants work with the principal to make sure rules are posted. Students will be randomly invited to explain the rules. If there is consistency of responses, then the message is getting out. Although formalized data are still being analyzed from evaluations and results are not yet available, schools are reporting dramatic decreases in student referrals.

Green Acres Elementary has started implementing the research-based Steps to Respect bullying prevention program this year within the context of the EBS framework [see the Assumption St. Bridget profile for more information about Steps to Respect]. Says Luber, implementing a bullying prevention program is the "next logical step." He adds, "For the program to be more powerful, it should be part of a larger context of schoolwide prevention program."

Location

Maine Project Against Bullying
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Web site: http://lincoln.midcoast.com/~wps/against/bullying.html

Description

The Maine Project Against Bullying (MPAB) was created in 1997 to investigate the prevalence of bullying at the elementary school level in Maine and to develop a bullying prevention curriculum. The project was commissioned by the Gender Equity Division of the Maine State Department of Education and funded by a Carl D. Perkins Grant.

The first step for the MPAB task force was to research and review available current curricula and other resources on bullying. This literature review provided concrete evidence to support early intervention and prevention efforts.

Next, a needs-assessment was necessary to obtain specific information for the State of Maine. As Chuck Saufler, director of the project points out, if there are no data about a particular region, people will refuse to believe there is a problem.

A survey was developed for third-graders to assess the nature and extent to which bullying occurs in school, children's reaction to bullying, whether they have informed others and what outcome resulted, children's perception of their own bullying behaviors, and gender differences regarding these issues. [To download a copy of the survey for your

own use, go to
http://lincoln.midcoast.com/~wps/against/3survey.html]

The survey defined bullying behaviors in ways that third-graders easily understand: teased in a mean way; called hurtful names; left out of things on purpose; threatened; hit, kicked, or pushed.

The results of the survey taken by 4,496 children from 127 schools (28 percent of all third grade students in Maine) showed that something needed to be done. Here are some of the more compelling results: (for complete survey results see http://lincoln.midcoast.com/~wps/against/finalreport.html)

- 22.6 percent of third-graders said they were threatened, 40.7 percent said they were teased in a mean way, 40 percent were called hurtful names, 34.3 percent were left out of things on purpose, and 37.5 percent were hit, kicked, or pushed every day, once or twice a week or month.
- Only 44.3% of the students said they felt "very happy and good" about being at their school.
- Although 91.3 percent reported taking action against bullies, 15.3 percent of children said it got worse after they reported it, and 21.7 percent said nothing happened.
- 13.8–17.7 percent reported that they engaged in bullying behaviors. This was twice as high as MPAB expected
- 26.3 percent said they felt "very unsafe" or "kind of unsafe" walking to and from school.

Schools that don't believe bullying is a problem should survey their students, says Saufler. "Clearly teachers do not see 90 percent of bullying that goes on. Kids aren't doing it in

front of teachers," as the survey results indicate. They are bullying in the hallways, on the school routes, and in school buses. It is important that there be supervision in these areas.

During the third year of the project, the task force worked on developing a training curriculum based on Olweus' schoolwide Bullying Prevention Program. MPAB brokered an agreement to implement a curriculum, train trainers in the curriculum and train school staff who applied for the Department of Health grant. Fourteen schools have begun implementation.

The bullying education program is a six-phase intensive schoolwide approach:

Phase One: Introduce the Program
Invite parents to attend the first awareness program.
Conduct a needs assessment and set goals based on the results.
Conduct a bullying survey to acquire baseline data.
Make the community aware of the program.
Secure funding.

Phase Two: Train Staff
Hold a one-day workshop to present survey results and staff development in bullying education and prevention.
Introduce staff training curricula to all staff; orient coordinating committee; provide reflective meetings for staff.

Phase Three: Develop Bullying Prevention Policies
Include documenting of bullying incidents, link to discipline system through gradual consequences, and include parental notification and meetings.

Phase Four: Introduce Bullying Prevention Curriculum
Select and purchase age-appropriate curricula.
Integrate in all classrooms.
Support bullying lessons with guidance program.

Phase Five: Reinforce Bullying Prevention
Develop a "telling climate" in the school so bullying is reported to adults.
Provide appropriate interventions for children engaged in bullying behavior and their targets.

Phase Six: Evaluate the Program
Re-administer the bullying survey to measure changes.
Revise/update the program to meet changing needs.

Throughout all phases of the program, working on improving school climate is key to the program's success. Saufler emphasizes that a bullying prevention program must be integrated with other climate improvement work such as violence prevention.

Common Keys to Success

The schools and state task force profiled in this booklet have indicated similar keys to implementing a successful schoolwide bullying prevention:

1. Schools need to be serious about implementing the program. This means that:

- Administrators from the principal to the school board need to promote the program and fund it fully.

- The principal must provide leadership in the school and have the commitment to carry it out.

- Implementing a balanced, thoughtfully written policy that isn't overresponsive is crucial. So-called punitive "zero tolerance" and "three strikes and you're out" policies are not effective. Tougher rules with tougher consequences won't build a positive culture.

- Policies are no good if they aren't backed up by the administration. Teachers need to know that the principal is fully behind the policy so there is consistency on what is important schoolwide.

- One-shot workshops will not improve the situation. There are no magic bullets, no quick fixes; success requires remaking the school climate. This can't be done with half your staff.

- The school must have a committee to share the responsibility and ideally a committee coordinator who receives a stipend.

- A schoolwide bullying prevention program should build a climate in which children feel cared for and respected, with consistent rules and policies, and where adults model appropriate behavior.

2. Teachers need to understand that their response to bullying makes a difference. Teachers need to validate a child's pain and concern when a child comes to them for help. "If we are minimizing the problem, we are sending a message that their concerns don't matter," says Saufler from the Maine Project Against Bullying.

3. Children can't do it alone. You must develop an atmosphere of trust within which kids can have the courage to report bullying, either of themselves or others. If you teach the students to report bullying, but you don't prepare your staff to respond appropriately and effectively, you will be defeating your purpose. Children will quickly learn that they will receive inconsistent or non-responses and will no longer report bullying.

4. Bullying is not part of normal conflict. Says Saufler, "Be real clear about that with parents, teachers, and children: bullying is continued abuse of power that is intentionally hurtful." Teacher and staff training should emphasize this fact and train teachers to look at the dynamics between children who are bullied and those who bully. Peer mediation is an inappropriate response to bullying because of the power imbalance of the situation. Says Saufler, "You would no more sit a child who bullies and his/her target down to talk it out than you would sit down a wife and her husband who abuses her."

5. Playground areas, cafeterias, and bus stops must be supervised. These are the areas where most bullying occurs. Supervision means being alert and responsive to children's interactions.

6. Teach children strategies to reduce bullying incidents. Teach them that if they invite a child who is standing alone to join their conversation or game, the child will be a less likely target for bullying.

RESOURCES

PROGRAMS MENTIONED IN THIS BOOKLET:

Steps to Respect: A Bullying Prevention Program

Contact:
Committee for Children
2203 Airport Way South, Suite 500
Seattle, WA 98134-2027
Phone: 1-800-634-4449
Web site: http://www.cfchildren.org/

Olweus' Core Program Against Bullying and Antisocial Behavior (also known as the Bullying Prevention Program)

For more information visit the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (CSPV) at the University of Colorado Web site at:
http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/model/bully_materials.html

Or contact:
Dan Olweus, Ph.D.
University of Bergen
Research Center for Health Promotion (HEMIL)
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Effective Behavior Support (EBS) Program

Contact:
Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior
College of Education
1265 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403-1265
(541) 346-3592
E-mail: ivdb@darkwing.uoregon.edu
Web site: http://www.uoregon.edu/~ivdb/

Technical Assistance Resource

National Resource Center for Safe Schools (NRCSS)

NRCSS provides technical assistance and resources on school safety and violence prevention to schools and school districts. The Center is operated by NWREL under a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Safe and Drug Free Schools Program of the U.S. Department of Education.

The Center provides access to research on school safety, and includes a lending library. The Web site includes answers to frequently asked questions about school safety, promising and effective programs, timely information about hot topics such as bullying and crisis response, and news about funding opportunities to assist with planning and program implementation.

For more information call the National Resource Center for Safe Schools at 1-800-268-2275, e-mail safeschools@nwrel.org or visit the Web site at www.safety-zone.org

Additional Resources

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CHOOSING A BULLYING PREVENTION PROGRAM

When sorting through the various options available, note that effective prevention programs share key elements. Choose a program after you conduct a needs assessment to ensure that the goals of the program meet the goals of your school.

Here are some questions to consider in selecting a program, adapted from the Comprehensive Health Education Foundation (1994):

1. Is the program research-based?

2. Does the program use a comprehensive curriculum developmentally tailored to be age specific? Does the program build on what is learned each year?

3. Does the program include practical lessons and activities in addition to information?

4. Is the program comprehensive, involving family, peers, all school staff, and the entire community?

5. Does the program use culturally sensitive material appropriate for students from a wide variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds?

6. Does the staff find the program satisfying and valuable? Does it include staff training?

7. Is the program cost efficient?

8. Can the program be incorporated into the curriculum? Is it incorporated into the safe schools or violence prevention program?

9. Do students find the program meaningful and enjoyable?

CREATING SAFE SCHOOLS ANTI-BULLYING PLANNING WORKSHEET

Using the Creating Safe Schools Process, these questions can help you develop a schoolwide anti-bullying program.

1. Develop School/Community Partnerships
   Who should be involved?

2. Conduct Comprehensive Need Assessment
   What data indicate the need for the program? Where will the data come from?

3. Develop an Anti-Bullying Plan
   What are the measurable goals and objectives? How much and when?

4. Identify Strategies/Implement Programs
   Which intervention(s) will you choose? What do you need to know before you select?

5. Conduct Evaluation
   How will you evaluate? Who will do it? What if it doesn't say what you had hoped?

6. Share Outcomes and Make Adjustments
   Who will get the results? How will adjustments be made?

The National Resource Center for Safe Schools
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

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